

JOHN HONNOLD AS TEACHER

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Those who are fortunate in life experience, at some point, the profound effect of studying with a great teacher. All good teachers impart knowledge and, indeed, transmit enthusiasm for inquiry. Transcending courses and subject matter, a few extraordinary teachers leave a lasting imprint on the whole personality of their students. John Honnold is among those extraordinary teachers. It has been my good fortune to have been his student, not for a year or two, but for over three decades. Happily, as we mark his official retirement, I can look forward to continuing to learn from the master for many more years.

Most of us who arrived at the Law School in the fall of 1953 had only the dimmest notions about law and legal education. We in my class soon found ourselves sitting with a dazzling and formidable group that included Louis B. Schwartz, A. Leo Levin, Paul J. Mishkin, Clarence Morris, and John Honnold. John Honnold taught Constitutional Law. To the day, I can recall the sense of wonder that came with the unfolding of the grand themes of a society governed by law, capped by a written Constitution and expounded by a Supreme Court.

A year later, John Honnold led us into the mysteries of the Uniform Commercial Code, which had just been published in the Llewellyn version. The first edition of Honnold on Sales and Sales Financing was the text. Again, a great teacher instilled in a class appreciation of the dynamism of law as a living, evolving matter. Struggling with the difficulty of coping with a pristine statute wholly lacking the gloss of judicial interpretation, the class learned about the very special nature of law reform through legislation.

During our final years as law students, we came to realize that one of the secrets of John Honnold's extraordinary success as a teacher was the extraordinary quality of the person. John and Anne Marie Honnold took genuine interest in students as individuals. On a spring Sunday afternoon visit to the Honnold's home, a group of us found to our total delight that this master classroom teacher loved folk songs and could sing beautifully. Included in that group were a number of students from abroad, a first indication to me of the Honnolds' deep commitment to the view that all peoples are one family.

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When the Faculty invited me to return to the Law School, one of the perceived needs was for a junior teacher in commercial law. I jumped at the opportunity and have remained ever since a disciple of the William A. Schnader Professor of Commercial Law.

John Honnold's manifold contributions to the life of the Law School cannot be recapitulated in full. Every day it seems that something of value is added. Developing a teaching style that stretches students minds through well-crafted problems proved a great success in making statutes come alive. Building a graduate program in law, John Honnold laid a strong foundation and patiently expanded the structure until now the Law School welcomes each year some 50 students, mostly from overseas. Honnold's casebook on Sales and Sales Financing, going into its fifth edition,¹ has become a standard work across the country. His most recent book, *Uniform Law for International Sales Under the 1980 United Nations Convention*,² masterfully establishes a basis for understanding this new field of international commercial law.

The most striking aspect of John Honnold's remarkable professional career to this point is the sense of wholeness that brings together every part. A well-conceived, working philosophy of life and the law is evident in everything that he has accomplished. One of his early efforts, seeking to give students a better sense of the horizons ahead, led to the assembling of a remarkable collection of readings published under the title *The Life of the Law*.³ Although the program for which that book was compiled was unfortunately abandoned by the Law School many years ago, John Honnold continues to pursue his vision that all law students should be challenged to see the subject of their chosen careers from the highest perspectives they can attain.

¹ J. HONNOLD, CASES AND MATERIALS ON THE LAW OF SALES AND SALES FINANCING (5th ed. 1984) (in press).

² J. HONNOLD, UNIFORM LAW FOR INTERNATIONAL SALES UNDER THE 1980 UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION (1982).

³ J. HONNOLD, THE LIFE OF THE LAW, READINGS ON THE GROWTH OF LEGAL INSTITUTIONS (1964).